



Montgomery County  
Department of Transportation

## Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act de minimis Finding

### The Replacement of Gold Mine Road Bridge over Hawlings River

# PUBLIC NOTICE

December 15, 2016

In compliance with Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (49 USC 303), hereinafter referred to as “Section 4(f),” and its implementing regulations codified at 23 CFR Part 774, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) is notifying the public through this notice that it will request the Federal Highway Administration make a de minimis (or minor) impact finding in accordance with Section 4(f) regarding the permanent effects of the proposed Replacement of Gold Mine Road Bridge over Hawlings River, and to provide the opportunity for public review and comment of this proposed determination.

Section 6009(a) of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) allows the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to determine that certain transportation uses of Section 4(f) land will have no adverse effect on protected resources. With respect to publicly owned parks and recreation areas, a finding of de minimis impact may occur if a transportation project does not “adversely affect the activities, features and attributes” of the Section 4(f) resource. When this is the case, FHWA requires written concurrence from the official(s) with jurisdiction over the resource. Public notice and opportunity for public review and comment on the finding is required.

The purpose of this project is to provide a safe roadway condition for the traveling public and to improve pedestrian/bicycle safety by providing shoulders and an 8-foot shared use path. The 2015 Bridge Inspection Report found that the bridge roadway width is insufficient for current needs and the load carrying capacity is reduced enough to warrant a high priority for full bridge replacement. In addition, other design issues such as frequent flooding, inadequate sight distance approaching the single lane bridge, and outdated bridge railings for vehicle crash safety need correction. This bridge is considered functionally obsolete. The replacement bridge will be replaced by a 55-foot single span bridge, consisting of a precast, prestressed concrete slab beam structure with a reinforced concrete deck slab. The beams will be supported on new reinforced concrete abutments with steel piles set in rock. The new bridge will be widened to the north to provide a 33-foot clear roadway width that will accommodate two 11-foot travel lanes, two 4-foot minimum shoulders and a 8-foot bike path. This width will allow for the implementation of safe on-road bicycling in accordance with the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) 2005 Olney Master Plan.

The proposed bridge replacement will require fee simple right-of-way from the Hawlings River Stream Valley Park, which includes property owned by Montgomery County but managed by M-NCPPC and property owned and managed by M-NCPPC. Although the right-of-way required from the recreation area is considered a “use” as defined by Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act (1966), there will be no negative impact on the activities, features, and attributes that qualify the recreation area for protection under Section 4(f). MCDOT, through this notice, is notifying the public that it will request the Federal Highway Administration make a de minimis (or minor) impact finding, in accordance with Section 4(f). M-NCPPC, as officials with jurisdiction, concurred with the *de minimis* finding on November 4, 2016. The public is requested to provide comments on this finding.

Comments regarding the proposed Section 4(f) *de minimis* impact findings may be submitted to MCDOT in writing during the 15-day comment period through **December 30, 2016**. Written comments may be provided by e-mail at [brian.copley@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:brian.copley@montgomerycountymd.gov) or by regular mail to:

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